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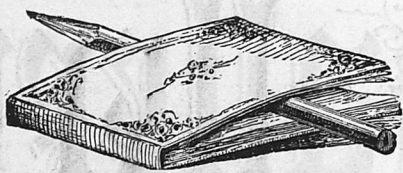
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My Note Book.



LITTLE is being done in the American picture trade as yet. Some sales are reported, but in most cases the name of the buyer is mysteriously withheld. Beyond the sale of Mr. J. G. Brown's well-known picture, "The Dress Parade," representing some street boys playing soldier, which has been sold for \$1500 to Mr. Irving M. Scott, President of the San Francisco Art Association, and S. J. Guy's "First Up," bought by the same collector for \$750, the only authenticated sale in New York of importance I know of at the present writing is that of Mr. Constant Mayer's "Adversity." This latter was sold to Mr. John Newell, President of the Illinois Central Railroad, for fifteen hundred dollars, through Mr. Reichardt. The subject is in Mr. Mayer's characteristic vein and is painted in that peculiarly subdued key of color with which all who know his work are well acquainted. The story is of two reduced gentlewomen selling flowers in the street; they have just been repulsed. It is a sad picture, and, like all this artist's works, is full of sentiment. I saw it in the spring, before it was finished. There has been rather an important change in it since then. The background, which originally showed a flight of steps leading to the terrace of an aristocratic mansion, has given place to a dead wall in a by-street, Mr. Mayer, on second thought, having wisely concluded that the unfortunate ladies would be less likely to seek their bread among persons of their own caste than among those of lowly station.

Now here are two picture sales which, being bonafide, are void of all mystery. Neither artist, dealer, nor buyer has any motive for withholding the facts from the press. There is, indeed, no sufficient reason for making a secret of the sale of an important picture, if the sale be effected in good faith. In the interest of all parties concerned such a transaction should be a matter of record.

"It is certainly curious," the art critic of The Sun remarks, "that there should be offered in New York at present a larger number of really fine examples of modern masters, dead and yet living, than one would suppose it possible to get together in the market abroad or anywhere else." Not so very curious. There is a rage for foreign paintings just now, and the dealers intend that the supply shall be equal to the demand.

The present extravagant prices for foreign paintings with "big names" cannot be expected to continue much longer. The dealers doubtless know this, and so make their hay while the sun shines. Even the really fine examples of modern masters—and there are doubtless many such in the dealers' hands just now—are held at prices far beyond their actual value, and those persons who buy them as investments I believe will make a mistake.

The picture auction sales will soon begin. Let buyers be wary of those auctioneers who decline to furnish the press with the names of the buyers, and look out at future auctions for some of the same pictures to be put up for sale again.

Furniture auction sales, it is well known, are very seldom conducted fairly. I looked in at one in Broadway a few weeks ago, being attracted by the announcement that the surplus stock of a well-known first-class furniture house in Twentieth Street was to be sold, without reserve, to the highest bidders. "A walnut chamber-suit in crimson

figured wool tapestry," which must have cost \$100 to make, was knocked down for \$27.50; a "walnut Eastlake chamber set" of about the same value immediately followed for \$42.50. Then a "walnut Eastlake parlor-suit in raw silk"—six pieces—was declared sold for \$42. A "walnut library suit in dark crimson figured tapestry, silver threads, and plush bands," which never cost the manufacturer less than \$200, was knocked down for \$41. All this time not a name had been announced by the auctioneer in connection with any of these alleged purchases. Occasionally some lady in good faith would bid on some trifle, and a great show was made of the fact, and her name was duly published and her deposit was duly received. Presently a gentleman who had come to buy a certain suit of Eastlake parlor furniture, seeing that it was apparently going for a mere trifle, made a bid on it. He was immediately snapped at, as a voracious blue-fish snaps at a moss-bunker, and in a few minutes he was run up to the full value of the Eastlake suit, and became its owner. At this stage, being fully satisfied as to the character of the sale, and wondering how the first-class furniture firm in Twentieth Street could afford to risk its reputation in such hands, I left with the conviction that I had yet to meet the auctioneer in whom there is no guile.

Some more of the Tanagra figurines have gone out of the city, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art is yet unprovided. This time it is the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts which is the possessor, and Mr. Fairman Rogers is the generous donor.

"Le Portrait de la Marquise," an important picture by Kaemmerer, exhibited in the Salon this year, has been bought for two thousand dollars by Mr. Angelo L. Myers, a wealthy connoisseur of this city.

QUEEN SEMIRAMIS was cruel and licentious, as we all know; but hereafter let history relieve her from the odium of having been extravagant in her expenditures. Calista Halsey has been writing about the fair Assyrian in The Boston Sunday Courier, and shows that the celebrated hanging gardens of Babylon cost next to nothing—in fact, "did not amount to much any way." They were, it seems, nothing but an ordinary kind of garden on the roof, such as any of us might have. Miss Halsey evidently knows what she is talking about; for, in the following interesting bill of particulars, she gives every item of the cost of the hanging gardens. Where she got her information, of course, is none of my business:

Madeira vine bulbs.	\$o 20
Twine	05
2 boxes petunias at 50 cents	1 00
6 crocks verbenas at 37½ cents.	2 25
5 crocks geranium at 15 cents.	75
1 crock nasturtion.	35
Phlox.	50
Filling one gypsy kettle.	1 00
3 day lilies at 20 cents.	60
2 crocks ferns at 20 cents	40
Chrysanthemums	1 00
Cost of delivery.	50
Total	\$8 60

At the dolls' shops in Paris, where everything that a fashionable doll can crave, in the way of clothes, is kept "in endless variety," as the advertisers say, there was, not long ago, added a jewelry department, where there were real gold ear-rings, real gold watch-chains, real gold necklaces, and real solitaire diamonds for dolls. Now we read of furniture departments in the dolls' shops. Miniature chairs and sofas in the most fashionable materials are displayed, and tiny bales of carpets, yards of small curtains, rolls of bed-hangings, and chintz for chair-covers; the little dressing-tables are marvels of elegance, and the washing apparatus is thoroughly "à l'Anglaise," to suit the present state of mind in French fashionable society. There is even a piano, whose tiny keys respond with a little noise when tapped with a pin. The great doll-show of the Paris Exhibition last year revealed to the English manufacturers how very far they were behind the French and Austrian makers in the dolls' furnishing line. I am afraid that the American makers are still further behind.

Take such a case as occurred in Paris recently and created a great commotion in the world of dolls. A doll belonging to the daughter of a noble house was going to a dolls' and children's ball that very evening, and had no dress! What was to be done? "A rush was made to a certain well-known dolls' establishment, and a dress in white tulle embroidered in floss-silk was ordered. Thirty fingers were set to work, and the entire costume was finished in time!" Now had such a contingency arisen in New York, or Boston, or Chicago, say, what would have been the consequence? I dare not answer my own question. The contemplation of the subject cannot but be humiliating to our national pride.

By a curious process of evolution The Music Trade Review, hitherto a weekly periodical devoted solely to the interests of musicians and musical instrument makers, within the short space of two or three months has gone through a series of changes almost revolutionary, apparently without any loss of its original patronage. As a preliminary step the title was changed to "The Musical Times and The Music Trade Review." Its readers having become tolerably familiar with that, it is now announced as "The Musical and Dramatic Times and [in very small letters] Music Trade Review," which title, fully explaining the increased scope of its aims, it will retain. Mr. John C. Freund, its editor, has established the fact that he knows how to interest musicians and the music trade, and no one who reads his sparkling journal in its present improved form will doubt his ability to interest the general reader.

Matters journalistic are not particularly within the scope of "My Note Book." But while I am on the subject, it may not be uninteresting to note that I am informed by a London correspondent in a personal letter that, apropos of the Levi Lawson-Labouchère squabble, Mr. Lawson told my friend that the Prince of Wales had written thanking him and assuring him of his sympathy.

I am indebted to the courtesy of Colonel I. Edwards Clarke, of Washington, for a copy of his pamphlet entitled "A Tribute to Bayard Taylor." It consists of an essay and a poem, both of decided merit. The pamphlet has an interest quite apart from its literary claims, however, in the curious steel engraved portrait of Mr. Taylor that faces the title page. The distinguished traveller and scholar is represented, with turban and scimitar, in the fanciful garb of the Orient. He is depicted in the moment of drawing the weapon from its scabbard; but his face is composed, and it is evident that the act is without hostile intent. The original of the portrait must have been taken many years ago, for the slim figure and guileless cast of features are those of a very young man. Those who knew Mr. Taylor in the vigor and mature dignity of his later days will hardly regard the picture with pleasure. It is too much like the familiar one of Disraeli, taken in the days of gorgeous waistcoats and mosaic scarfpins, when the great premier was the curled darling of the ladies and his shrine was the drawing-room of Lady Blessington. But a generation or so ago it was quite "the proper thing" for young geniuses to have their pictures taken in fancy costume, and I doubt not that the gentle Bayard in the fierce-looking habiliments of the blood-thirsty Turk was vastly admired by the sentimental young ladies of his day.

The recent death of William Henry Powell was very briefly noticed by some of the newspapers, and by others not at all. By the public at large it passed almost unheeded. Yet, years ago, Mr. Powell had already proved himself an artist of marked ability, and, by his works, had made for himself a reputation which will long be associated with the history of our times. It seems almost impossible that his name should be soon forgotten, for his work is perpetuated to-day on millions of bank-notes which bear the miniature of his painting in the Capitol, "De Soto Discovering the Mississippi." His "Battle of Lake Erie" has been engraved again and again, and is hung on the walls of thousands of American homes.

MONTEZUMA.